



— Montana Office of Public Instruction

Linda McCulloch
State Superintendent

February 1, 2006

Dear Colleague:

Capture the Gold: READ! the theme for the 2006 February I Love to Read Month activities, captures the spirit of the Winter Olympics. Many Olympic topics and themes can be integrated into disciplinary units which span all grade levels and areas of interest. A calendar of suggested activities is included in this mailing to help your school celebrate February "Reading Month." Please make copies of the materials for your staff and students.


I encourage you and your staff to plan activities that promote reading for enjoyment, as well as reading for information. February has been designated as "Reading Month" and February 14 as "I Love To Read Day" in Montana. You might plan a day or week in which all content areas are integrated with reading, writing and language activities.

The greatest gift we can instill in our students is the belief that reading is worthwhile. Ideally, that belief stems from a personal need for experiences with books and also from the knowledge that books are a valuable source of information. The well-rounded reader finds both purposes important. Surrounding students with a rich variety of literature, plus experiences that make a story come alive and draw the student into a book, can provide the basis for a genuine love of reading.

Reading aloud from a selection of literature is an excellent way to introduce a theme, a concept, or new content materials to students. Read aloud to students every day, no matter how old they are.

Join with us in celebrating February as "Reading Month" and February 14 as "I Love to Read Day." Help students foster the belief that reading is worthwhile. Please share with us some of the ways in which you celebrate reading. Your comments on the "I Love to Read" activities will be appreciated. For further information contact June Atkins, Literacy Specialist, by telephone at (406) 444-3664 or e-mail jatkins@mt.gov.

Happy reading,


Linda McCulloch
State Superintendent

February—I Love to Read Month—2006

Capture the Gold—READ!

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>"I absolutely love to read; it's a huge part of my life. There is no limit to where you can go and what you can do in books. Reading lets my imagination run wild." (Michelle Kwan, champion figure skater, <u>Reading Today</u>)</i></p>			<p>1</p> <p>Reading Marathon Set an expected goal of hours of reading. Provide awards for students who reach the goal.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Groundhog Day Read a story about the origins of this day.</p>	<p>3</p> <p>Capture the Spirit of the Olympics Read about the Winter Olympics.</p>	<p>4</p> <p>I Love Sports Read a book about your favorite Olympic sport.</p>
<p>5</p> <p>Follow ... your favorite sport or Olympic game in the newspaper and keep a log of the team or athlete's season.</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Olympic Activity Research the history of the Olympics. Create a Centennial Olympic timeline. Include each of the Winter Games and World Events.</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Name a Room Name each room after a Winter Olympic game.</p>	<p>8</p> <p>Book Jacket Design a book jacket for a book about your favorite sport or athlete to put on the bulletin board.</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Olympic Cities Report on the city hosting the 2006 Winter Olympics.</p>	<p>10</p> <p>Service Learning Day Plan a class service project.</p>	<p>11</p> <p>Special Reading Day Make a special reading area at home just to use for reading during the month of February.</p>
<p>12</p> <p>Find something interesting in the newspaper. Read it to someone.</p>	<p>13</p> <p>Research Research the country where the Winter Olympics will be held as well as other participating countries. Learn about the land formations, climate, culture and customs.</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Valentine's Day Wear Red Day! Make hearts that start, "I love to read because ... Give a prize.</p>	<p>15</p> <p>WIN How many words can you find that mean WIN? Use your newspaper.</p>	<p>16</p> <p>Sports Haiku Compose haiku poems on winter sports.</p>	<p>17</p> <p>Read with Style Day Students and teachers dress up nice and/or fancy.</p>	<p>18</p> <p>Exercise Your Right to READ!</p>
<p>19</p> <p>TREAT Give yourself a treat. Ask someone to read to you.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>President's Day Find a story to share with your class about your favorite president.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>Carry a Book Day Everyone carries a book in a pocket, under arm, or in a book bag.</p>	<p>22</p> <p>Veg Out!! with a good book. Bring a can of food to donate to a worthy cause.</p>	<p>23</p> <p>Food Fest Plan a healthy "food fest" for the classroom. Each student shares a poem that uses food as a theme.</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Read Along Hold a read-along, sing-along. Use an overhead to project the words of old favorites and new songs. Students illustrate the transparencies.</p>	<p>25</p> <p>Jeans Day Wear jeans today in honor of Levi Strauss' birthday. READ!</p>
<p>26</p> <p>Smile! Have a Good Book Day!</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Sweat It Out with a Good Book Day Wear sweat suits, T-shirts or sweat shorts.</p>	<p>28</p> <p>Academy Awards for Books Students nominate their favorite book for an Academy Award. The best nominations are highlighted at an Academy Awards Ceremony.</p>	<p>1</p> <p>March</p> <p>Read Me Day Everyone wears clothing that can be read.</p>	<p>2</p> <p>Dr. Seuss' Birthday Invite someone such as the mayor, principal, superintendent, member of basketball team, etc., to read. Roll out the red carpet, the throne, a red-velvet cape and jeweled crown. www.nea.org/readacross www.reading.org</p>	<p>OPI Linda McCulloch, Superintendent Montana Office of Public Instruction PO Box 202601 Helena, Montana 59620-2501 www.opi.mt.gov</p>	<p>For additional information contact: June Atkins Literacy Specialist (406) 444-3664 Fax (406) 444-1373 jatkins@mt.gov</p>

CAPTURE THE GOLD: READ!

Suggested activities for February 2006 I LOVE TO READ MONTH and throughout the year.

Capture the spirit of the Olympics--read about the Winter Olympics. Many topics and themes related to the Olympics can be integrated into interdisciplinary units which span all grade levels and areas of interest. The use of a large map of the world would also be helpful.

The Olympics generate a lot of news coverage. Encourage students to bring in newspaper and magazine articles about the Olympics. They could be used to develop bulletin boards and a variety of activities. In editorials and columns students should determine if the opinions and positions taken are supported by facts.

Research the Olympics. What does "Olympiad" mean? How and where did they begin? What are the dates of the Winter Olympics this year and what are some of the future dates? What is the newest sport to be added to the Winter Olympic competition? What are the Olympic symbol, motto and flame? Compare the games and sports in the Winter Olympics with the Summer Olympics. Report the findings in many varied and unusual ways.

Research the country where the Winter Olympics are being held. How does the host city prepare for the Olympics? Also research information about the participating countries to learn about their culture and customs, land formations, climate, cities and towns and how they adapt to their environments.

Many races take team work. For example, carrying of the Olympic torch requires hundreds of helpers such as: organizers to map the route and decide on relay points; coaches to train and encourage the runners; police to control traffic on busy roads; volunteers to hand out food and water to the runners; reporters and photographers to record the event; and someone to make sure runners, organizers, police, mayors, volunteers, and news people are all doing the right thing in the right place at the right time. Research how these activities are carried out.

Greece is also the home of many famous myths which describe heroes of the gods. What role do they have in modern literature and folklore?

FEBRUARY DATES TO REMEMBER AND EXPLORE

- **AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH**--Call (202) 628-1776 for a schedule of events; ask for the Historian General's Office.
- **AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH**--For a celebration of African American history as featured in picture books and nonfiction elections, from pre-Colonial time to the present see the February 1996 issue of Teaching preK-8, "For Black History Month: A Timeline of Books," pp 46-48.

FEBRUARY

2--GROUNDHOG DAY

13--Anniversary of the opening of the first public school in America. The Boston Latin School opened in 1635.

14--VALENTINE'S DAY

17--NATIONAL PTA FOUNDER'S DAY

20--PRESIDENT'S DAY

100th Day of School-- for ideas go to <http://www.nea.org/readacross/curiousgeorge.html>

FAMOUS AUTHOR'S BIRTHDAYS

7--Charles Dickens
7--Laura Ingalls Wilder
9--Alice Walker
21--Erma Bombeck

PRESIDENT'S DAY

On February 20 we celebrate President's Day. To help students learn more about our nation's presidents, especially George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, have your students create a newspaper.

Students develop a daily newspaper for the Inauguration Day for each president studied. Assign students to be in charge of different sections of the newspaper. (Be sure students are familiar with all parts of the newspaper.) All articles in each newspaper must coincide with the date on the newspaper.

READ ALOUD

Read aloud to the class everyday--no matter how old the students are! Read students brief but complete stories as often as possible. Provide variety such as high interest, humor, special interest, family stories. Be a model. Let students see you read.

FOOD FEST

Plan a "food fest" for the classroom. Each student shares a poem which uses food as a theme.

READ-ALONG

Celebrate with song by holding a read-along, sing-along. Use an overhead to project the words of old favorites and new songs. Students can assist in the preparation by illustrating the transparencies.

KID'S ROOM LIBRARY

Develop a "Kid's Room Library"--made, run, and maintained by students.

NAME A ROOM

For one day, name each room in the school after a book character or fantasy location.

AUCTION

Students bring in paperbacks to "auction" (for play money). Use student auctioneers who encourage bidding.

HEAVY READING WEEK

Weigh all the books read by students all week. Record this information everyday on a graph.

BOOKMARK CONTEST

Hold a bookmark contest. Print the winning entries for distribution.

I hope these suggestions whet your imagination. Please send ideas you are willing to share to June Atkins, (406) 444-3664, e-mail, jatkins@mt.gov or fax, (406) 444-1373.
